

Minutes for the Legislative Branch Computer System Planning Council Meeting held on June 5, 2000.

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Bob Person, Executive Director, Legislative Services Division, ex officio chairman
Scott Seacat, Legislative Auditor
Clayton Schenck, Legislative Fiscal Analyst
Rosana Skelton, Secretary of the Senate
Marilyn Miller, Chief Clerk of the House
Representative Mark E. Noennig (By Speaker Phone)
Brett Boutin, ISD

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT

Chuckie Cramer, Senate Sargent At Arms

TECHNICAL SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT

Legislative Services Division

Hank Trenk
Jeanette Nordahl
Steve Eller

Legislative Fiscal Division

Terry Johnson
Pam Joehler

Legislative Audit Division

Tori Hunthausen

Bob Person called the meeting to order at 1:40 P.M.

After introductions were made, Bob asked Pam Joehler if she would give a report on the activities of the IT Management Subcommittee. Pam reported that the subcommittee had its last meeting March 8th (after the March 2nd Computer System Planning Council meeting). At that meeting the subcommittee mainly worked on two items: 1) the legislative process for review of IT budgets for the 2001 session and 2) the governance structure for IT in state government. The subcommittee made a recommendation to the full Legislative Finance committee on the process

for review of IT budgets for the 2001 session, but the Legislative Finance committee has deferred action on the recommendation. Pam also said that the subcommittee had asked staff to research the area of governance structure for IT. Since then the staff has completed the research and published a report with a recommendation.

The Council then moved on to item 3 on the agenda: FY 02/03 Branch Computer System Plan. Hank presented a spread sheet outlining the FY 02/03 Computer System Plan and Budget. Hank explained that the spread sheet did not include current FTE costs. The spread sheet did include several items which required personal services costs. All of these costs were budgeted in the spread sheet as contracted services. The Council discussed at length the merits of FTE versus Contracted services. The Council decided to leave the personal services costs in the spread sheet as contracted services for now and possibly after the 2001 session to ask the Legislative Council (the approving authority for LSD) if they would like to have some of the contracted services converted to FTE.

The Council also had a long discussion on the Legislator Automation item in the proposed budget. Hank explained that this item was currently set up to provide laptops for all 150 legislators. Hank also said that the proposed budget did not contain any money for programming and system development work, nor did it contain any money for chamber automation. The laptops would mainly be used for retrieving/researching information from the internet (including legislative information), communication via e-mail, and word processing. Marilyn suggested that a more phased in approach might work better. Some where between 25 to 35 laptops for the first session. Rosanna said that chamber automation would be a better use of the laptops than word processing/e-mail/internet. Hank was asked to do some research into the cost of chamber automation.

Scott said that he thought the proposed budget should have something in it for contingencies, i.e. the requirements for some system development work came up that were not anticipated. The Council asked Terry and Tori to come up with an amount for that area.

Scott asked that the LAD and LFD Interface to BANNERS items in the budget be combined because both LAD and LFD need some of the same information from BANNERS. Clayton agreed and said that they would work closely with LAD in this effort but that they did not always need the same information nor the detail of information that LAD needed.

Bob asked Hank to discuss Item 4 on the agenda - FY 02/03 Computer System Plan. Hank said that he would take the Plan for FY 00/01 and update the parts of it that needed updating based on the projects outlined in the FY 02/03 Branch Computer Budget. Hank asked if there was anything else that should be included in the plan. The Council asked Hank to proceed as planned.

Bob then asked if the Council had any input into what the legislature should plan for e-government. Scott said that we should at least be able to sell our publications over the internet. Bob said that we would probably begin to do that once the state got the infrastructure in place to accept credit cards over the internet. Hank said that the legislature's main use of the internet was

as information provider and that it had a very small potential to conduct transactions over the internet and therefore he could not see that the legislature had a very big effort ahead of them to react to e-government.

The Council then took up item number 6 - How should the legislature allocate resources and answer questions regarding legislator use of state owned equipment and use of legislative resources on special IT projects requested by legislators. Bob said that he would take this issue to the Legislative Council and the directors of LFD, LAD and LSD.

Bob then asked Hank to describe the pilots that would be conducted for the 2001 session. Hank said that they were planning 4 pilots as follows: 1) Wireless LAN, 2) Access for legislator's own laptop, 3) Internet broadcast of floor sessions, 4) Personal Digital Assistants (PDA). For Wireless LAN technology, Hank planned on hooking up a couple of staff members to a wireless LAN in the capitol building. The main goal of this pilot would be to test wireless technology to see how much effort it takes to set up and maintain, as well as to determine the speed of throughput. In the Access for legislator's own laptop pilot, the goal is to test how difficult it would be to hook up a laptop that the legislator owns to the legislative network in the capitol building. Two to three legislators would participate in this pilot. The cost and effort associated with this could then be compared with purchasing laptops for legislators. With regard to the Internet broadcast of floor sessions, the pilot would test how much effort it would take to set up an environment to broadcast floor sessions on the Legislative Branch intranet. This pilot would give us a better feel for what it takes to broadcast this full time for the 2003 Session. The PDA pilot would encompass purchasing 2 to 3 PDAs for legislators or staff to determine if these devices could be of any benefit.

Bob asked the Council if they thought it would be better to use an internet form to send messages to a legislator during session as opposed to using e-mail. The Council thought that a form would be better because it requires that the person put in their address. The receiving legislator could then tell if the sender was from their district. Steve said that one minor drawback to using a form was that it would require that the sender have Internet access. There might be a small number of people who have e-mail but do not have Internet access. Rep. Noennig said that he would like people to put in their district number but not all people know that information. Bob said that lead into the next item which was software to help citizens locate their legislator. Hank explained that there was a website called Vote Smart that had a feature that allowed you to determine your legislator by entering your mailing address. Bob said that this would not work in all cases, because in some part of Montana, people have P.O. boxes. The Council agreed to allow a link off of the branch web site to the Vote Smart web site for the purpose of looking up legislators.

Bob then gave the Council an update on Kiosks in the Capitol building. He said that there were 3 kiosks being planned. One on the first floor to be maintained by DofA, and two on the 3rd floor to be used as Bill Status terminals maintained by the Legislature.

The Council set the next meeting date for September 12th at 1:30.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 PM..

c43 lbcspc.mi9